

Winter 2-20-2014

EMU Men's Baseball: Baseball Set to Battle Unfamiliar Foe in UT Martin February 20, 2014

Eastern Michigan University

Follow this and additional works at: http://commons.emich.edu/sports_scr

Recommended Citation

Eastern Michigan University, "EMU Men's Baseball: Baseball Set to Battle Unfamiliar Foe in UT Martin February 20, 2014" (2014).
Eastern Michigan University, Department of Intercollegiate Athletics. EMU Archives, Digital Commons @ EMU
(http://commons.emich.edu/sports_scr/370)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the University Archives at DigitalCommons@EMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Sports Scores by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@EMU. For more information, please contact lib-ir@emich.edu.

Baseball Set to Battle Unfamiliar Foe in UT Martin

The three-game series has been moved to a neutral site at Rose Park in Nashville, Tenn.



2/20/2014 2:28:00 PM

YPSILANTI, Mich. (EMUEagles.com) -- For the first time in the program's 65-year history, the Eastern Michigan University baseball team will face the University of Tennessee at Martin on the diamond. The three-game series will take place Feb. 21-23 at Rose Park in Nashville, Tenn. due to unplayable field conditions at UT Martin. Game one begins Friday, Feb. 21 at 7 p.m. The Eagles enter the series with a 1-2 record after lifting the lid on the 2014 campaign at No. 16 Clemson University. Meanwhile, the Skyhawks (0-4) will be looking for their first win of the season after being swept by the University of Alabama Birmingham in their season-opening series, Feb. 14-16, and falling to Ole Miss, Feb. 19.

SERIES MOVED TO BELMONT: Due to inclement weather making the field at Skyhawk Park unplayable, EMU and UT Martin will now face off at Rose Park in Nashville, Tenn., home of the Belmont University Bruins. Due to the change to a neutral site, the series will now also act like a neutral series. UT Martin will be the home team for game one, while the Eagles will get the privilege of being the home team for game two. The team batting last in the third game will be decided via coin flip.

The first game of the series is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 21. However, weather could push the game back to Saturday. The final games on Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 22-23, are currently set for 4 p.m. For the latest in changes to the series schedule, stay tuned to EMUEagles.com.

HISTORIC WIN AT CLEMSON: The Eastern Michigan University baseball team won its first season-opening game since the 2010 season as the Eagles snuck past the No. 16-ranked Clemson University Tigers, 6-5, in 10 innings, Feb. 14. The Eagles used a four-run sixth to take their first lead of the game before scoring a run in the 10th to get the victory at Doug Kingsmore Stadium in Clemson, S.C.

EMU last won its season opener Feb. 22, 2010, in a 3-1 decision over No. 25 Kansas in the Metrodome. The victory over the Tigers also marked the fifth win over a ranked team in the past seven years. Eastern defeated No. 26 Notre Dame, 12-6, last season, and the Eagles also defeated then-No.4 Clemson during the 2011 season-opening series. EMU knocked off No. 19 Tennessee as well, Feb. 10, 2007, by a final 6-3 tally.

SCOUTING THE SKYHAWKS: UT Martin (0-4) enters this weekend in search of its first win of the young 2014 campaign. The Skyhawks lost all three contests to UAB to open the season before falling, 6-0, to No. 27 Ole Miss on Wednesday, Feb. 19. Despite lacking a victory, UT Martin's starting pitching has been fantastic to begin the season, allowing just three earned runs through 23 combined innings of work. Moreover, the top two arms in the rotation, Taylor Cox (0-1) and Dalton Potts (0-0), did not surrender an earned run in either start as they each went seven innings in their respective outings. Cox picked up the loss in his appearance due to one unearned run that crossed the plate.

The bullpen has been the thorn in the side of the Skyhawks as their relievers have given up 11 earned runs in 9.2 innings. Six errors have also led to five unearned runs given up by UT Martin. Senior Phil Sorensen leads Skyhawk hitting with a .286 batting average as he and Fletch Johnson have picked up four hits through the first four games. As a team, UT Martin has scored five runs on the season while batting at a .154 clip.

LEE LONGO EARNS MAC WEST PLAYER OF THE WEEK HONORS: EMU first baseman [Lee Longo](#) was named the Mid-American Conference West Player of the Week, the conference announced Tuesday, Feb. 18. The EMU baseball student-athlete earns the weekly honor for the first time in his career after a big weekend at the plate against No. 16 Clemson University.

Longo led the EMU bats in the season-opening series against one of the nation's top teams in Clemson, Feb. 14-16. The first baseman, making the transition after earning All-MAC First Team accolades as the team's designated hitter last year, hit at a .426 clip against the nationally-ranked Tigers. Four of Longo's six hits were doubles as he tallied a .769 slugging percentage along with three runs and three RBI. He went 2-for-4, Feb. 14, with a run scored to help Eastern win its first season opener since 2010, upsetting the No. 16-ranked team in the country, 6-5, in 10 innings. He followed that performance up with a pair of two-hit performances in the final two games of the series, knocking in three runs and scoring twice in those games as well.

Not only did Longo hit at an impressive rate against one of the best teams in the country, but the Mayfield, Ohio native finds his numbers at the top of the conference in several statistical categories. His 10 total bases and four doubles top the Mid-American Conference, while the six hits against the Tigers are tied for the second-most out of all MAC hitters through the first week of the season. Longo currently boasts a 10-game hitting streak dating back to last season.

BUSTING OUT THE BATS: It would be understandable for the EMU bats to struggle against the arms of one of the country's top teams in No. 16 Clemson; however, that was not the case as the Eagles notched 30 hits off of Clemson pitching over the weekend. The mark is tied for the most in the conference during the season-opening games. Also, 10 of those 30 hits went for extra bases, including nine doubles which lead the MAC. The Green and White also recorded 15 RBI against the Tigers which ties for second out of all MAC teams.

WEBER MAKES HIS RETURN: Pitching for the first time in nearly two years, redshirt-senior [Steve Weber](#) returned to the mound in a crucial situation, Feb. 14. EMU scored a run in the top of the 10th inning of its season opener against No. 16 Clemson and needed just three outs to pull off the upset. Head Coach [Jay Alexander](#) brought Weber out of the bullpen to finish the job. After sitting out the 2013 season recovering from Tommy John surgery, the tall, hard-throwing righty was pitching for the first time since May 24, 2012. With the pressure of securing a victory over a nationally-ranked team as well as EMU's first season-opening win in four seasons, Webber looked back to his old form, striking out one Tiger and allowing one hit to get the save and the EMU 6-5 victory.

DOUBLE TROUBLE: In the series finale against No. 16 Clemson, Feb. 16, the Eagles hit the cover off of the ball, racking up 13 hits that led to seven runs. Five of EMU's 13 hits were two-base hits, adding to the nine doubles blasted throughout the weekend. The game total and the season total both sit atop the doubles category in the MAC. Moreover, [Lee Longo](#) leads all MAC hitters with four doubles of his own as he has twice as many as the next four closest to him, including teammate [John Rubino](#), who has a pair of two-baggers on the season.

BRONSON FROM THE BULLPEN: The first EMU reliever called upon this season was the left-handed [Devon Bronson](#), and the sophomore proved to be the best arm out of the bullpen in the 2014 opening series against No. 16 Clemson. Bronson pitched 2.1 scoreless innings of relief, not allowing a hit in his two appearances as he struck out two Tigers and walked just one. Bronson relieved EMU starter [Jake Andrews](#) in the season opener, helping the Eagles come away with a 6-5 victory in extra innings, Feb. 14. The win was the fifth in the last seven years over ranked teams for Eastern, and it was the first season-opening victory since 2010. In the series finale, Feb. 16, Bronson retired all three batters he faced, striking out one in his inning of relief.

FIVE GAMES IN SIX DAYS ON THE HORIZON: After kicking off off the season with a pair of three-game sets over back-to-back weekends, Eastern opens up mid-week play with two games against Austin Peay, Feb. 25 and Feb. 26. Following an off day on Thursday, Feb. 27, the Green and White match up against the University of Kentucky for three contests, Feb. 28-March 2.